

Message Text

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47

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 FMC-02

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FM AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

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INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

UNCLAS DHAHRAN 1183

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EWWT, BGEN, EGEN, SA

SUBJECT: DAMMAM PORT SITREP

REF: DHAHRAN 0870

1. AS OF SEPTEMBER 11, DAMMAM PORT HAD 137 GENERAL CARGO VESSELS WAITING TO DISCHARGE (AS COMPARED WITH 152 VESSELS ON AUGUST 1). CARGO ON LASHIPS AWAITING BERTHING SPACE IS CALCULATED TO BE 882,033 TONS, OR SIX PERCENT MORE THAN AT BEGINNING OF AUGUST. SHIPS NOW REGISTERING FOR A BERTH CAN ANTICIPATE A 78-80 DAY BERTHING DELAY -- A SLIGHT DECLINE OVER SITUATION REPORTED AT BEGINNING OF AUGUST.

2. RAMADAN IS STARTING TO AFFECT PRODUCTIVITY IN DAMMAM PORT. LAST FULL WEEK BEFORE RAMADAN THE PORT AVERAGED 13,250 TONS PER DAY (AN AVERAGE HELPED BY CALLS OF RORO SHIPS). FIRST FULL WEEK OF RAMADAN THE RATE FELL 7730 TONS PER DAY. IN THE AFTERNOONS THERE ARE VERY FEW GANGS WORKING THE SHIPS AND THE PORT TAKES ON A HOLIDAY AIR.

3. RAMADAN IS NOT THE ONLY REASON FOR THE DECLINE IN THE THROUGHPUT
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OF THE DAMMAM PORT. FOUR OF DAMMAM'S 17 BERTHS ARE SET ASIDE FOR

CEMENT BUT THE CEMENT DISCHARGE RATE HAS SLOWED TO NEAR A TRICKLE. SAG, AS A COUNTERINFLATIONARY MEASURE, HAS IMPOSED A 42 RIYAL PER TON CEILING ON CEMENT TRANSPORTED OVERLAND TO RIYADH. CONSEQUENTLY TRUCKS FIND MORE LUCRATIVE LOADS TO HAUL IN AN AREA SHORT OF LAND TRANSPORT AND TRANSPORT IS ONLY AVAILABLE TO MOVE CEMENT TO LOCAL CONSUMERS. REPORTEDLY THE PORT HAS APPEALED THE FREIGHT-CHARGE CEILING.

4. ARAMCO'S TWO LASH BARGE PORTS CONTINUE TO INCREASE THEIR THROUGH-PUT CAPACITY. BY SEPTEMBER 10 THEY WERE HANDLING NEARLY 3,000 TONS PER DAY OR AN AMOUNT EQUAL TO A QUARTER THE NORMAL DISCHARGE RATE OF DAMMAM PORT. ARAMCO OFFICIALS ARE JUSTIFIABLY PLEASED OVER THE DISCHARGE RATE BUT REPORT THAT IT IS HIGHER THAN MIGHT BE EXPECTED AS THE OIL COMPANY HAS BEEN MOVING A GOOD DEAL OF HEAVY STUFF THROUGH THE PORT SUCH AS CRANES AND ONE-TON BAGS OF CEMENT. NEVERTHELESS, THE RATE IS IMPRESSIVE AND ILLUSTRATES WHAT CAN BE DONE WHEN A PORT HAS THE ORGANIZATION TO PUSH FREIGHT OVER THE DOCKS AND QUICKLY MOVE IT TO THE END-USER.

5. THROUGHPUT AT DAMMAM'S BARGE PORT CONTINUES TO IMPROVE ALBEIT SLOWLY. AS 1 SEPTEMBER THE OLDEST BARGES IN PORT (IN TERMS OF ARRIVAL TIME) WERE 21 BARGES DROPPED BY M/V SAM HOUSTON ON AUGUST 12. ALTOGETHER, THERE WERE 59 LASH BARGES WAITING TO BE OFF-LOADED.
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